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SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

**CURRENT SOVIET ACTIVITIES WITH PARTICULAR
REFERENCE TO THE FAR EAST**

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Office of National Estimates

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

**CURRENT SOVIET ACTIVITIES WITH PARTICULAR
REFERENCE TO THE FAR EAST**

Number 1

Published 6 April 1951

The intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Joint Staff participated in the preparation of this estimate. All members of the Intelligence Advisory Committee concurred in this estimate on 5 April.

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CURRENT SOVIET ACTIVITIES WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE FAR EAST

THE PROBLEM

To examine the scope and nature of Soviet and Satellite activities during the past three months and to estimate the probable purposes of such activities, with particular reference to the Far East.

CONCLUSIONS

1. During the past three months, the Soviet Union and its Satellites have continued, and in some cases accelerated, their programs for increasing the military and economic capabilities of the Soviet bloc.
2. In areas other than the Far East, Soviet and Satellite preparedness for war had reached such an advanced state before 1 January 1951 that large-scale operations could be initiated with little or no warning. Available intelligence on recent Soviet and Satellite activities in those areas discloses no specific indications of a Soviet intention to undertake aggressive action.
3. During the period under review, the USSR has placed special emphasis on the Soviet Far East; Soviet air activity there has increased sharply and strenuous efforts have been made to develop the area's economy, particularly for military purposes.
4. It is clear that the USSR is pursuing its long-range program to make the Soviet Far East logistically and militarily self-sustaining. Since the beginning of the Korean conflict, this program has apparently been pressed toward completion with more urgency, in order to prepare for any eventuality.

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5. The current increase in Soviet activities in the Far East does not in itself provide any firm indication of a Soviet intent to launch an early offensive in that area. We believe, however, that these activities indicate the serious possibility of increased Soviet participation, especially with air forces, in the Korean fighting. The form that this increased participation might take is not clear.

6. In view of the advanced state of Soviet preparedness for war, it is by no means certain that, even if the USSR had reached a decision for general war, such a decision would be revealed by military, economic, or political activities more indicative than those we have observed since 1 January 1951.

DISCUSSION

7. The foregoing Conclusions are based upon the following summary of Soviet and Satellite activities during the past three months:

a. Military

(1) Air. Beginning in mid-January 1951, night and bad weather flight training by strategic and tactical Soviet air forces (including naval air) throughout the Soviet Far East increased sharply and reached a level considerably higher than normal for the winter season. There is, however, no firm evidence that overall strength has risen or that there has been any major redeployment of units.

Soviet direction, training, and equipping

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of the Chinese and North Korean air forces have continued. In Western USSR and the European Satellites, air activity during this period was generally normal, except for some increase in East Germany.

(2) Army. Soviet support of Chinese Communist and North Korean forces in Korea has continued, but there has been no evidence to confirm reports that the USSR has actually supplied heavy equipment to the Chinese Communists. A long-range program of logistical and technical support for the Chinese Communist Army is still in progress. The Chinese Communist forces in Korea are currently being reinforced by 200,000 fresh troops of the CCF 1st and 2d Field Armies, with another 100,000 possibly en route. The type of equipment of these forces is unknown but two artillery divisions have been identified in the combat area. Since 1 January 1951, however, no significant changes in the strength, organization, or composition of the Soviet ground forces in the Far East have been noted.

(3) Navy. There have been no significant changes in Soviet or Satellite naval activity in the Far East. Although the Soviet naval budget for 1951 is approximately 50 percent higher than that for 1950, these funds will probably be used primarily for a long-range naval construction program, as well as to maintain existing units in a state of war-readiness.

b. Economic. The Soviet Union has continued to press vigorously its program to increase Soviet war-readiness and to bring the Satellite economies to a comparable position. Soviet activities in the Far East increased considerably during late 1950 and early 1951. Rail and water transport facilities in the Far East are being expanded; emphasis in petroleum production is being shifted to items of greater military value and jet fuel is being produced at one plant. Soviet stockpiling of

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essential materials continues throughout the Soviet orbit; the Soviet strategic stockpiling program appears to have been accelerated in the Far East.

c. Political. Since 1 January 1951, Soviet and Satellite political activity has undergone no significant change. The USSR has reiterated its support for the North Koreans and Chinese Communists as well as its confidence in ultimate victory. In the propaganda field, there has been a greater effort to prepare the Soviet and Satellite peoples psychologically for war. Japan has been repeatedly linked to US "aggression" in Korea and the issue of Japanese rearmament has been coupled with that of German rearmament. Chinese Communist propaganda has been placing increased emphasis on a long war and on tactics of attrition, and most recently it has stressed the relative unimportance of air and naval power in the Korean fighting.

8. Changes since 1 January 1951 in the military position of the USSR and its Satellites have had no noticeable major effects on combined Soviet and Chinese Communist offensive or defensive capabilities, which were already great enough to permit the initiation of large-scale offensive action with little or no warning. There are indications, however, that the Chinese Communist forces in Korea now require considerable additional logistical and technical assistance from the USSR in order to maintain their military capabilities. In addition, a sizable Communist air effort in Korea may now be required, both in order to give some relief to Communist lines of communication and to provide direct assistance to Communist ground forces. The combat readiness of Soviet air units in the Far East has improved as a result of the winter training of the tactical, naval, and long-range units there, and the limited offensive capabilities of the Communist Chinese Air Force have gradually increased under Soviet guidance and support. Soviet ground and naval capabilities in the Far East remain substantially unchanged..

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9. The Soviet supply situation in the Far East has reached a level which would support large-scale operations for at least six months, but a prolonged military effort would require a substantial flow of supplies from the western areas of the USSR.

10. It is not clear what form increased Soviet participation in the Korean fighting may take. However, the rapidly increasing tempo of Chinese Communist and Soviet air activity in the Far East, and the evident need for greater air participation, suggest a new phase of air activity is about to begin in Korea. It would be logical that Chinese Communist elements would operate against UN ground forces and lines of communication and that initially Soviet air elements would operate in strength behind North Korean lines. If this procedure should fail to obtain desired results, Soviet participation might be increased.

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